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A GREENBELT for the Bay Area



... open space for people.

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“OUR FINITE LAND . . .”

Across the nation our cities are in trouble and our land is being eaten away by urban sprawl. In the Bay Area, projections indicate that with our current style of sprawling development, 256,000 more acres of land — an area **nine times** the size of the City of San Francisco — will be consumed by 1990. If we allow this to happen, our goals of preserving open space — especially agricultural land — a healthy living environment, and revitalizing cities will be greatly jeopardized. It is imperative today to step back and look at what we have done and determine the options we still have to avoid repeating the mistakes of past decades. **The time is at hand to apply an ethic of stewardship to our most precious resource — our finite land.**

One option is to commit ourselves to a program of planned metropolitan land use that will both bring our cities back to life and save the land which surrounds them from further unnecessary and wasteful encroachment. In order to protect these productive lands, while also promoting positive community identification and revitalization of our inner cities, the perimeters of urbanization must be definitely and permanently established. That's why we need a regional Greenbelt.

THE BAY AREA'S NATURAL GREENBELT: How It Works

Today the communities of the Bay Area are surrounded by a great natural Greenbelt, which most citizens take for granted. This Greenbelt of open land provides us with the ingredients necessary to maintain a healthy balance between the natural and man-made environments of our Bay Region. But the future of this balance, and of the Greenbelt, lies in our hands.

By permanently protecting our natural Greenbelt we can ensure that the six functions of its open space lands can continue — functions which are absolutely necessary for the health and well-being of ourselves, our land, and our cities.

THE GREENBELT:



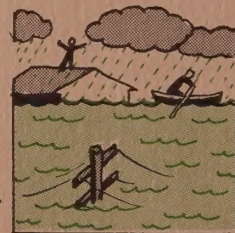
◀ PROVIDES LOCAL RESOURCE PRODUCTION in agriculture, grazing, mineral extraction and timber harvesting.

SHAPES AND CONTAINS URBAN DEVELOPMENT with community separators and with land to stop urban sprawl. ▶



◀ PROVIDES FOR HUMAN HEALTH AND WELL-BEING in the protection of watershed and airshed lands. In addition, it provides psychological benefits crucial to our individual and social well-being.

PROVIDES FOR HUMAN SAFETY by keeping flood plains, landslide areas and fire-prone areas from being developed. ▶



◀ ENSURES NATURAL AREA CONSERVATION in the maintenance of plant and animal habitats, and preservation of important geologic, historical and viewshed areas near cities.

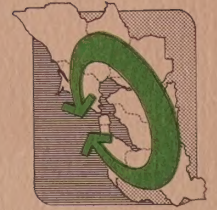
OFFERS RECREATION in regional parks, ecology study areas and wilderness areas, and in many other kinds of open land and water areas. ▶



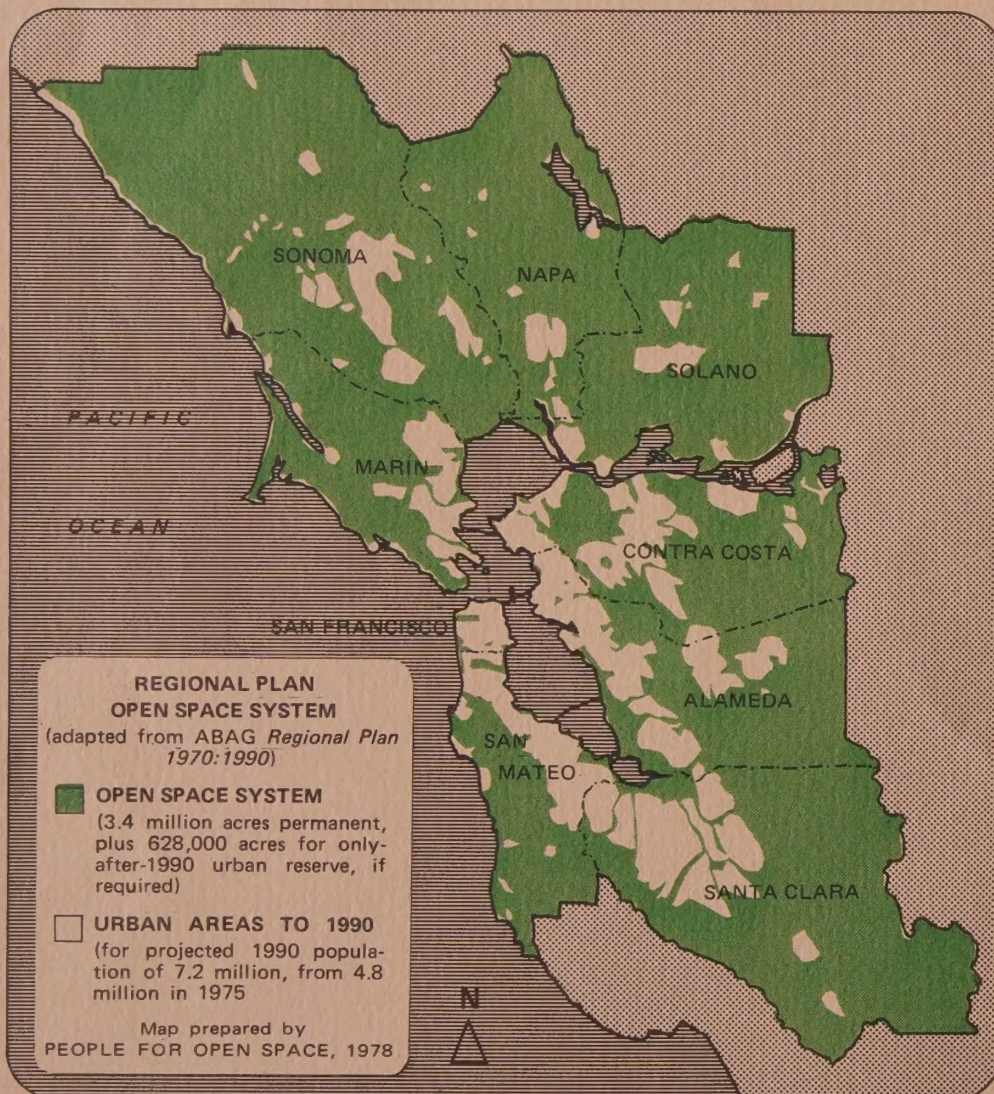
Today, the vital question Bay Area citizens face is how much of this productive open space

WHAT IS A REGIONAL GREENBELT?

A regional Greenbelt is an officially-established, permanent open space preserve surrounding and supporting the cities in a metropolitan region. The term "Greenbelt" is particularly important because it emphasizes the crucial need for specifically defining the boundary between urban areas and the open Greenbelt beyond.



An illustration of what the Bay Area Greenbelt should look like is the open space plan prepared by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) in 1970, shown in the diagram below. However, this plan anticipated many more people in the Bay Area by 1990 than will actually be present. Therefore, officially establishing such a Greenbelt now will require citizen-led revision of the ABAG Plan — county by county.



POS: Preserving Open Space for People

Since 1958, People for Open Space, a non-profit regional conservation group, has been educating citizens about the need for preserving the Bay Area's open space resources. We have helped local conservationists develop common policies and exchange information, and have carried out educational programs. During this time we have published the *Regional Exchange* newsletter and have sponsored 15 regional conferences throughout the Bay Area. In 1969, we published *The Case for Open Space*, a foundation-financed study that demonstrated for the first time that a permanent open space system was economically feasible in the Bay Area.

In 1976, we began a major new project. With the assistance of a grant from the San Francisco Foundation, we started organizing a long-term citizen effort to establish a permanent regional Greenbelt for the entire nine-county Bay Area. We believe that with strong citizen support, this goal of surrounding the Bay Area's cities with a system of permanently protected, productive land can be realized — we hope you will give your support to this effort.

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People for Open Space



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THE FOUNDATION OF OUR GREENBELT

Major portions of the Bay Area's natural Greenbelt are already preserved, and are thus the foundation for a future, officially established Greenbelt:

Watersheds set aside in years past have preserved tens of thousands of acres of land on the Peninsula, in the East Bay, and in Marin County — many of which are available for recreational activities.

In the 1960's and 70's, the establishment of the Point Reyes National Seashore in western Marin County and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in the Marin Headlands and in San Francisco added more than 100,000 acres of protected open space to the Bay Area's future Greenbelt.

Large amounts of agricultural land have been temporarily protected from urbanization pressures through the state's Williamson Act, which reduces property taxes on farmland in exchange for ten year guarantees of no development.

State, regional park and special district open space systems, together with large local parks and wildlife preserves throughout the nine counties, have also contributed major segments of permanent open space, now totalling almost 600,000 acres of the 3.4 million acres called for in the 1970 ABAG Plan.

But despite these important actions, the overall trend toward the destruction of our open land resources continues.



Point Reyes National Seashore

THE CHALLENGE: Establishing a Bay Area Greenbelt

Bite-by-bite the Greenbelt is gradually being eaten into — and with each bite goes more city-serving, land-based activity that can never be reclaimed: A poultry farm on the outskirts of Petaluma becomes a housing tract . . . a walnut grove near Concord is paved for a shopping center . . . a new freeway interchange near San Jose obliterates a prune orchard . . .

Our cities can be made livable again, and the lands around them kept green and productive. Officially preserving a permanent regional Greenbelt is essential to this task and will require strong support by Bay Area citizens. People for Open Space believes that with your support, action to establish the Greenbelt can begin now in the San Francisco Bay Area.

East Bay parkland - Mt. Diablo



Can be permanently protected from the pressures of sprawling urban development?